



WESTERN NEWS

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EPA awards new cleanup contract

A contract for the first block of properties to be cleaned of asbestos-contaminated vermiculite under a new competitive bid system has been awarded to Libby Restoration, a team including Sterling Construction Services, Marcor and SaLut.

Libby Restoration will be cleaning 25 to 30 properties based on a low bid of around \$25,000 per property. Environmental Protection Agency project manager Peggy Churchill told the Lincoln County Commissioners on Wednesday.

Along with Libby Restoration, Environmental Restoration and MCS Environmental bid on the block of cleanups. Each company had previously been given four properties to clean and use as a reference for bidding.

MCS has already started cleanup work on its four properties, and the other two firms are expected to start next week. Libby Restoration is scheduled to start on the block of proper-

ties Sept. 20.

A contract for the next block of properties will be awarded on Friday.

The EPA's goal for this calendar year was to clean 170 properties. Thus far, 78 have been cleaned with 150 currently projected to be finished by the end of the year, Churchill said. Indoor-only cleanups are expected to continue at a reduced rate over the winter months.

The three firms were chosen

by the EPA to participate in a five-year, \$37 million contract, which is expected to result in reduced costs through increased competition.

According to the EPA, additional benefits of the system include more experienced workers with a longer-term commitment and increased flexibility to allow a new contractor to be brought in as backup without having to develop, advertise and award a new contract.